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years to come with much suspicion and illwill and malign purposes rankling in their hearts.

Another effect of war is the increase of the spirit of violence and lawlessness among the masses of the people. The great strike which has been in progress in Russia, which has paralyzed the nation, has its roots, of course, in the general political and economic condition of the country. But the extraordinary violence and lawlessness attending it on the part both of some of the strikers and of the government officials are undoubtedly the effect of the war, which has stimulated the brutal passions and again accustomed the nation to habits of blood and destruction.

A third lesson of the war is that all aggression and high-handed trespassing upon the rights of others, however successful and fortunate it may seem at the time, ultimately brings disaster and punishment of some kind. The aggressions of Russia in the Far East, which seemed so successful and irresistible, and before which it looked as if all the East would fall hopeless and helpless, have suddenly reacted upon her own head, and she has been compelled to return home sorely wounded and bleeding. It will be well for the other powers which have been, at their sweet will, insulting and rending poor China, to take this lesson to heart without further delay, if they do not wish the fate of Russia to overtake them in some way. Let them give up their "spheres of influence," go home and attend to their own business, and conduct all their future dealings with the East in the spirit and on the principles of justice and fairness. That is the pathway both of duty and of security.

Another and perhaps the most serious of all the lessons of the war is that militarism is the worst enemy that a country can have. It eats away the vitality and degrades the soul of a people, and leaves it at last weak and helpless, even from the military point of view. Russia was universally supposed to be the mightiest military power on the face of the globe. She was dreaded everywhere as an antagonist in war and as an aggressive colonizer and land grabber. But when the test came there was found to be no strength in her. She went down under the blows of a small, vigorous new power, not yet degraded by militarism, which it was supposed she would quickly crush and grind to powder. It is the old lesson of history which the governments never seem to learn, to which the militarists are utterly blind.

Japan's greatest danger to-day is not from any possible war of revenge which Russia may make upon her in the future: it is from the militarizing of her people, which will almost inevitably result from her victorious campaign against Russia. If she continues to enlarge her navy and to send tens of thousands of her young men to live in the military barracks for two or three years, she will be unable to escape the degradation and devitalization which has always

followed standing armies. But if she lets her war strength alone and turns her attention more than ever to education, to the development of her industries and her commerce, as the great meeting of representatives of her chambers of commerce a few days ago indicates that she intends to do, her future of greatness and power need have no end. But let her beware of allowing her people to become possessed of a dominating military spirit.

As to Russia, it is to be feared that she has not well learned the lesson of the real cause of her collapse and humiliation. She is proceeding to repeat the immense blunder which she has made in the past. If, instead of building a great fleet of new war vessels and attempting to keep up her huge standing army, of neither of which she has the slightest need if she pursues a course of right and justice, she would abandon this naval program, send home one-half at least of her soldiers, and turn her attention to the education of the people and the general improvement of the conditions of life throughout the empire, she would not only bring herself universal honor and respect, but also strength and security without and within such as she has never yet known. It is a great opportunity that is now before the Czar's government, such as rarely comes to any government, such as may never come again if it is not improved.

Since the above was written the Czar's manifesto, proclaiming a real national assembly, has been published. On this we comment elsewhere.

End of the Rule of Absolutism in Russia.

The thirtieth day of October will hereafter be reckoned one of the great days in the history of human progress; for on that day the Czar of Russia sent out a manifesto which did away with the reign of absolutism in that empire, and gave to the Russian people what will speedily develop into constitutional government with a general franchise.

It was a great act, fraught with great blessing for the future of Russia and of the world, whatever immediate causes may have brought it about. Those who have closely scrutinized events in Russia for the last dozen years or so have seen that the day of Russia's redemption was near at hand. The only serious question was how it was to come about, by a peaceful revolution or by a storm of violence and bloodshed like that which fell upon France at the close of the eighteenth century.

Everybody will hope that the step which Emperor Nicholas has taken will avert the worst aspects of the storm which was already breaking. The past month, with its great strike and attendant disorders and violence, made a gloomy outlook, and the Czar did not speak a moment too soon to prevent widespread bloodshed and destruction and possibly the

breaking up of the empire. It was evident to the duller eye that the people had reached a point where they would no longer be put off. The whole nation was aroused and was clamoring for free institutions, and such they meant to have, at whatever sacrifices.

An examination of the text of the Czar's manifesto, given on another page, reveals the radical difference between this and all previous documents of the kind issued by him. He has broken with the oligarchy, which has so long ruled and depressed the land. His language is no longer roundabout and obscure. He renounces once for all the principle of autocracy. The national assembly proposed is not a mere council to advise the emperor, but a legislative body, which is to control the enactment of all laws for the nation. Freedom of conscience, civil liberty, inviolability of person, freedom of speech and of assembly, are all proclaimed in the plainest terms. Ultimate universal suffrage is also provided for.

That there will be difficulties in carrying out these decrees does not need to be said. Reactionaries will be numerous and stubbornly resistant. But the Czar will have the active and cordial support not only of the ablest statesmen of the land, but also of the educational institutions and of the masses of the people. The burning desire for liberty among the people will make them, however ignorant they may be at the moment, quick learners of the new ways. General education will spread rapidly among them, and we may expect in a single generation one of the most marvelous transformations that has ever come to any nation. For the Russians are essentially a great people, among whom wise and powerful leaders will rapidly appear wherever they may be needed.

We have not the least doubt that the Czar is extremely glad that the difficult step has been taken. He will be vastly happier under the new order. He has been perpetually miserable under the old. The new will harmonize much better with his own well known ideas and purposes. He will find himself able, under the new conditions, much better to carry out his earnest desires to promote the peace of the world and the well being of his own people. He will find himself much more powerful as the head of a free constitutional government than he ever did as an autocrat, professedly leading, but actually the slave of the bureaucratic government.

The fact that Mr. de Witte is to be the Premier in the first Cabinet of the new government means much for the immediate success of the new order. He is probably, on the whole, the ablest and wisest man in Russia in political life. He is a thoroughly modern and progressive man in most of his ideas. He will create confidence abroad in the new order, and that will go far towards making it stable and successful. All citizens of the United States will respond with great heartiness to Mr. de Witte's message to them soliciting their sympathy and coopera-

tion with Russia in the experiment in free government which she has undertaken. "I am sure," he says in his message to the people of this country through the Associated Press, "the American people who understand what freedom is, and the American press, which voices the wishes of the people, will rejoice with the friendly Russian nation at this moment, when the Russian people have received from his imperial majesty the promises and guarantees of freedom, and will join in the hope that the Russian people will wisely aid in the realization of those liberties by cooperating with the government for their peaceful introduction. Only thus will it be possible to secure the full benefits of the freedom conferred upon the people."

The effect of the step which the Czar has taken will be enormous on the rest of the world. If it is followed up sincerely, as we believe will be the case, it will soon silence the spirit of cynical though often just criticism which has for long years made the Russian government the target of its biting shafts. The participation of the people in the government will greatly check and possibly entirely destroy the aggressive foreign policy which has made Russia the dread of the world. Internal tyranny and merciless repression will largely cease, and this will allow the conscience of the whole civilized world to breathe more easily. If the Czar had been directly aiming at inspiring a better, healthier and more pacific spirit in the mutual relations of the nations, he could not have done anything better fitted to produce this result than the issuing of the manifesto which has just gone from under his hand.

There is little doubt that the people of the empire, who have suffered with remarkable patience under the scourge of the recent war, and have shown such unusual self-restraint during the painful weeks of the great strike, which they had determined to make effective in securing constitutional government, will respond quickly and generously to the Czar's overtures, and will do all in their power to aid in the working out of the great plan which he has set before the nation. At any rate, we hope this will be the case.

So far as other nations are concerned, we feel sure that the step which Emperor Nicholas has taken will meet everywhere with the most cordial sympathy and support. The rest of the world has suffered with suffering Russia, and will rejoice with her in every stage of her good fortune in the light of freedom and popular government.

Editorial Notes.

Increase of Membership.

The leaders in the work of the American Peace Society are making a very special effort this season to increase largely the membership of the Society. At no time in recent years,